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# **San Bernardino County Operational Area**

## **Emergency Operations Plan**

### **Citizen Corps Program Annex**

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**DRAFT**

San Bernardino County Fire Department

Office of Emergency Services

June 30, 2003

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## INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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### INTRODUCTION

During the 2002 State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush announced the creation of the USA Freedom Corps, a call to service for every American. Citizen Corps is the component of the USA Freedom Corps that encompasses public education, training, and volunteer opportunities to engage all citizens in helping to make their communities safer, stronger, and better prepared for preventing and handling terrorism, and disasters of all kinds.

Citizen Corps proposes to bring together leaders from law enforcement, fire services, emergency medical services, emergency management, volunteer organizations, the private sector, as well as local elected officials to form Citizen Corps Councils. These councils will provide oversight for engaging citizens in emergency planning and response, homeland security, and promoting preparedness and family safety through public education and outreach, training opportunities, and volunteer programs.

Citizen Corps Programs are sponsored by the Department of Justice (DOJ), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The Bush Administration and FEMA initiated the program for 2002.

The primary California Agencies involved are the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and Volunteerism, The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), the Emergency Medical Services Authority, and the Attorney General's Office.

All citizens are encouraged to become involved in one of the five Citizen Corps Programs. However, they need to be careful of how many disaster programs they cross-over with. An allegiance needs to be made to a particular program to make sure there is no confusion when they respond to a disaster.

[In April, 2003, San Bernardino County Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services \(OES\) submitted an application, and received approval, to use grant funding to update the County Operational Area's \(OA's\) Emergency Operating Plan \(EOP\). The primary purpose of this Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2002 Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Supplemental Grant is to develop a Citizen Corps Program Annex \(Annex\). The fiscal year 2002 FEMA Supplemental Grant Citizen Corps and Community Emergency Response Team \(CERT\) represent the first year funding of these programs. The continued support and integration of all programs will be contingent on future year Citizen Corps Grant funding.](#)

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**PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of [this Annex](#) is to provide the Operational Area (OA) with a document that outlines and defines a standardized approach and structure for creating Citizen Corps Councils in San Bernardino County. This will help to ensure citizen participation within a community by coordinating Citizen Corps Programs, identifying volunteer opportunities to support local law enforcement, fire services and other emergency response personnel, and specifying local resources to support Citizen Corps.

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**SCOPE**

Citizen Corps was designed to engage every American in community and family safety programs as a way to prepare people in advance for emergencies, natural disasters, and acts of terrorism. By using an integrated, strategic, and comprehensive approach, we can effectively utilize the time, talents, and interests of volunteers in support of first responders and overall community preparedness. Prepared citizens in service are a powerful resource and are better able to respond quickly and effectively in any emergency.

The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) governs emergency response statewide and is the backbone of California's disaster planning and response system (Government Code § 8607). Developed in the early 1990s, SEMS is a statutory requirement and is mandated for all State agencies. Local governments and special districts must use SEMS in order to receive reimbursement for response-related personnel costs. The federal government also recognizes SEMS principles when participating in emergency response and planning activities within California.

SEMS is the structure through which all coordination and resource allocation takes place through the multiple levels of support – field, local government, Operational Area (county), region, and State. Whenever the challenges of an emergency exceed the capacity of one level, assistance is requested from the next level above.

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**MISSION  
STATEMENT**

The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

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**NATIONAL  
CITIZEN CORPS  
PROGRAMS**

[There were originally five Citizen Corps programs, however the fifth program, Terrorism Information and Prevention System \(Operation TIPS\), was removed for re-evaluation and, at this time, is not part of](#)

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[the program, but listed here for your information.](#)

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**Programs**

- Community Emergency Response Team ([CERT](#)) -
  - Neighborhood Watch Program
  - Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)
  - Medical Reserve Corps ([MRC](#))
  - [Terrorism Information and Prevention System \(Operation TIPS\)](#)
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**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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**PLANNING GUIDE  
FOR CITIZEN  
CORPS  
PROGRAMS**

[The Citizen Corps Program Planning Guide is to be used as a quick reference for determining whether the Citizen Corps Program addresses the required elements. Jurisdictions may jeopardize eligibility for grant funding if they do not comply with the criteria set forth in this document.](#)

[Plans must reflect the needs of the jurisdiction, particularly in the areas that will likely impact them and their capabilities where it is recognized that jurisdictional differences will exist. This guide should be used in developing your programs.](#)

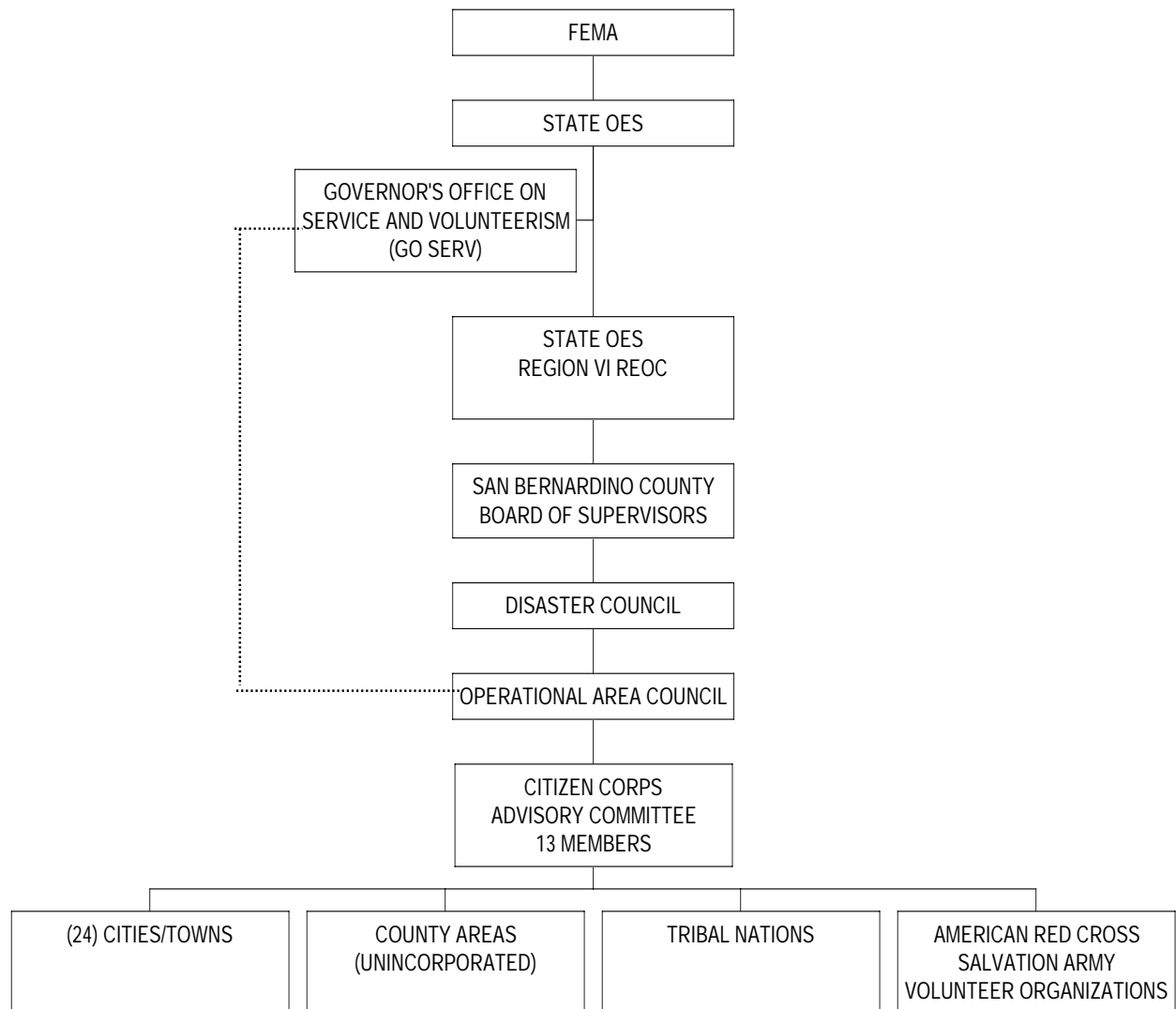
[Enter the reference \(page number, paragraph, chapter section, etc.\) or Not Applicable \(N/A\) in the space provided at the beginning of each item. Some of the elements described below may be documents separate from the primary Citizen Corps Program plan; if so, indicate placement in another document by \(AD\), and name of document.](#)

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**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

The organizational chart below shows the hierarchy of the governing body within the Citizen Corps structure; FEMA, State OES, Region VI REOC, Board of Supervisors, Disaster Council, Advisory Committee, Operational Area, City and County Councils, American Red Cross, Tribal Nations, Salvation Army, and other affiliated agencies. A description of each entity within the chart is listed below.

**CITIZEN CORPS COORDINATING COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



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**CITIZEN CORPS  
COORDINATING  
COUNCIL  
[AGENCIES](#)**

Below is a list of agencies within the Citizen Corps Coordinating Council (CCCC) and included is a description of the membership and functions each entity.

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**FEMA**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is designated to coordinate the Citizen Corps program. FEMA fosters state and community participation, develops training standards and materials for citizens and trainers within the five programs. In addition, this agency develops financial incentives and tie-ins with other federal programs to encourage local government participation in Citizen Corps.

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**State**

The State governing body manages and coordinates with the regions in their state. The key state responsibilities include: identifying needs and developing a statewide strategy for increasing the first responder and volunteer collaboration; developing statewide marketing strategies; matching Citizen Corps training needs with other major state training initiatives; reporting statewide accomplishments; and ensuring that Citizen Corps communities receive consideration for any relevant grant funding administered by the state.

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**State OES,  
Region VI**

The State's Region VI office coordinates with the Operational areas. The Region VI office provides assistance and guidance in the day-to-day activities as well as in disasters. Assists in reporting Operational Area request, disaster information, and accomplishments to the State level; and ensuring that Citizen Corps communities receive consideration for any relevant grant funding administered by the state.

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**Board Of  
Supervisors (BOS)**

[Provide the necessary authorization in support of the County's Citizen Corps Council Program.](#)

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**Disaster Council**

[Established as the County's Citizen Corps Council and provide functional guidance to the overall program and its components.](#)

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**Citizen Corps  
Advisory  
Committee**

Representatives of the Citizen Corps Advisory Committee (CCAC), 13 Members, shall be as follows:

- San Bernardino County Fire Department (1 – Member)
- San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (1 – Member)
- San Bernardino County Fire Chiefs (1 – Member)
- San Bernardino County Police Chiefs (1 – Member)
- San Bernardino County Office of Emergency Services (1 – Member)
- Emergency Management Zone Coordinators or his/her designee (5 – Members)
- San Bernardino County Department of Public Health (1 – Member)
- Red Cross (1 – Member)
- Tribal Nations (1 – Member)

They function as the established working committee created by the San Bernardino Operational Area Coordinating Council (OACC) to develop a recommended Citizen Corps Program structure to the OACC.

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**City And County  
Councils**

The city and county CCP Councils are representative of all 24 cities within the County of San Bernardino and the county itself, totaling 25 entities within the San Bernardino Operational Area.

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**Tribal Nations**

[The local tribal nations have established their own program called Tribal Emergency Response Team \(TERT\). CERT trained individuals could assist the TERT upon request.](#)

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**American Red  
Cross**

[The American Red Cross will train Community Emergency Response Team \(CERT\) courses to the local citizens. CERT trained individuals could assist the Red Cross upon request.](#)

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## CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL

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### INTRODUCTION

The Citizen Corps Councils will bring together leaders from the relevant sectors of communities to coordinate the Citizen Corps effort. The purpose of the council is to have all decision makers at the table to manage existing volunteer resources, to leverage mutually supportive endeavors among the represented groups, and to direct the overall local plans to implement Citizen Corps in the community. All Citizen Corps Council's will be administered by a public safety agency such as law or fire. Each City/Town/county will have only one council that has the lead role in implementing Citizen Corps groups within their jurisdictions.

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### CREATION

To establish a Citizen Corps Council it will be the responsibility of the City/Town/County to provide the Operational Area (OA) lead agency with a letter showing the make up of their Citizen Corps Council. Upon determination by the OA lead agency, that the council formation has met the prescribed council member qualifications for a Citizen Corps Council, the City/Town/County will then be asked to submit a resolution from their governing body. This resolution will be kept on file with the OA, however there could be extenuating circumstances that may require review on a case-by-case basis.

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### SUB-GROUPS

Citizen Corps Sub-Groups will be organized and managed by the jurisdiction and council in which they were formed. A representative from each sub group will then report to the City/Town/county Citizen Corps Council. The primary council has the responsibility for reporting to and coordinating with the Operational Area (OA) basis.

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### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Below is a listing of Membership Information, including Qualifications, Responsibilities, Leadership, Pre-registration and Council registration.

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#### Qualifications

The Citizen Corps Council for each jurisdiction can be an existing group that currently supports a strong team that brings together sectors of the community, such as an existing disaster council. Membership could include the following:

- Elected officials such as the mayor, city council members, county supervisors, or tribal government leaders.
  - Emergency management from the first responder community: law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services and health care providers.
  - Volunteers, community service, existing community sub-structure
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such as advisory boards, voting districts, wards and the business community.

Participation on the council is making a commitment to educate the public on safety, to help citizens take an active role in protecting themselves from harm, to teach citizens what to do in the event of a crisis, and to expand volunteer opportunities that will enhance the communities' preparedness.

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## Responsibilities

While this Annex provides tremendous flexibility to implement Citizen Corps in a way that best suits individual communities at the City/Town and unincorporated areas, there are some general responsibilities for the local organizing group that include:

- Create an action plan to involve the community in prevention, preparedness, and response activities and to mobilize the community in a large-scale event.
  - Identify ways in which the community's volunteer resources can help meet the needs of its first responders.
  - Work with existing neighborhood leaders, or creating a neighborhood leadership structure, to design a systematic approach to educate the public and encourage Citizen Corps participation throughout the community.
  - Spearhead efforts to offer citizens new and existing volunteer opportunities educational information, and training courses to address crime, terrorism, public health issues, and natural disaster risks.
  - Recognize all activities that promote prevention, preparedness and response training as a part of Citizen Corps and encourage new endeavors.
  - Organize special projects and community events to promote Citizen Corps activities and recruiting volunteers to participate.
  - Foster a spirit of mutual support by working with Citizen Corps Councils in neighboring communities and jurisdictions to be able to share resource in times of need.
  - Capture innovative practices and reporting accomplishments to the state coordinator for Citizen Corps.
  - Survey communities to assess increased awareness and Citizen Corps participation.
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## Leadership

Leadership within the council is critical for success. A chosen leader could be an elected law or fire official, an executive from a community employer, or a leader from the volunteer community. Because of the first responder's role in the event of an emergency, and because of the law and fire based nature of the five-core programs of Citizen

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Corps it is suggested that first responder representatives not take the lead role for the council. The most important qualifications for the leader of the council are the ability to motivate team members to reach the collective goal of making their communities a safer place to live, work and play and providing the opportunity for all citizens to participate.

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## Registration Process

Upon completion of the Council Member Qualifications section above, log on to [www.citizenscorps.gov/ccorps](http://www.citizenscorps.gov/ccorps) and register your Citizen Corps Council information by clicking on the registration link. Upon access to the Council registration web page, answer the template questions. This will include a name for your council, the name, title, phone number, and e-mail address of a local official that supports the creation of a Citizen Corps council; this could be the mayor, City/Town manager, county supervisor, or emergency management director.

The second part of the template addresses the Council point of contact (POC). This person is the point of contact for Citizen Corps in your community. You will notice that more information about this person is required. This person will receive information from state and federal partners and whose name and e-mail address will be posted on the Citizen Corps website. You may wish to create a generic e-mail address so that all information feeds in to one point. Once you have completed the registration template [press](#) the submit button.

Upon receipt, FEMA will notify the State of California Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GO SERV). The GO SERV staff will then contact the Operational Area (OA) of the registering jurisdiction to verify the authenticity of the Citizen Corps council registration request. The OA will either verify or deny the registration.

Once the verification of the registration is approved by the OA the GO SERV staff will be notified and they will advise FEMA to post the Citizen Corps council to the FEMA website. It is the responsibility of the registering agency to check the FEMA website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) to see if the council is posted.

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## CITIZEN CORPS PROGRAMS

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### PROGRAMS

Only the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program has been addressed with funding or direction from FEMA, or from the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GO SERV). The other Programs (Neighborhood Watch, VIP and MRC) are listed as possible future funded programs.

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### COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program provides training in emergency preparedness and in basic response techniques to local trainers who in turn train citizens, enabling them to take a more active role in personal and public safety.

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### Specific goals

To enable neighborhood or workplace teams to prepare for and respond effectively to an event until professional responders arrive. Provide a link between neighborhood, workplace teams, and professional responders. (Website)

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### CERT Standards and Protocols

The best source of help in an emergency or disaster is the paid or volunteer professional responder. But, if they are not available to address immediate life-saving needs or to protect property, CERT members can help. CERT is not intended to replace a community's response capability, but rather, to serve as an important supplement. The agency sponsoring the CERT program is creating a volunteer resource that is part of the community's operational capability following a disaster. That agency should develop training standards for CERT personnel and protocols for their activation and use. CERT members must keep their safety in mind as their first priority. CERT volunteers must know their capabilities and the limitations of their training and equipment and work within those limitations. When deployed appropriately, however, CERT can complement and enhance first-response capability in neighborhoods and workplaces by ensuring the safety of themselves and their families working outward to the neighborhood, office, and beyond until first responders arrive. CERT can then assist first-response personnel as directed.



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	<hr/> <p>CERT Units Do Not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suppress large fires.</li> <li>• Enter structures that they consider heavily damaged and dangerous (e.g., leaning or moved from foundation.).</li> <li>• Perform medical, fire, or search and rescue operations beyond their level of training.</li> <li>• Perform hazardous materials cleanup or respond to incidents involving radiological, chemical, or biological agents.</li> </ul> <hr/>
<b>Eligibility Requirements</b>	<p>Anyone can be part of a CERT group as long as they have a willingness to care about fellow citizens, and be able to build relationships and cooperate with first responders.</p> <hr/>
<b>Training</b>	<p><a href="#"><u>Existing CERT Train the Trainers and Operational Area Trained personnel will provide training. All training classes will be based on the FEMA 20 hour Certified Course with allowable modifications when necessary.</u></a></p> <hr/>
<b>Identification Cards</b>	<p>Identification (ID) cards will be issued to CERT members that have been trained by a certified Citizen Corps CERT trainer. This ID card must be worn when responding to an emergency. The ID card must be in clear view, whether on a lanyard or in a view pocket on a CERT vest, to be allowed at an emergency site.</p> <hr/>
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM</b>	<p>Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program, which enlists the active participation of citizens in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime in their communities. For over thirty - (30) years, the Neighborhood Watch Program has successfully kept people safe in their homes and neighborhoods throughout the nation. By bringing together local officials, law enforcement and citizens, Neighborhood Watch engages public and private community members in the common cause of public safety.</p> <hr/>
<b>Eligibility Requirements</b>	<p>First responders cannot be on every corner, so citizen involvement is essential to combat crime. Neighborhood Watch members place stickers in their windows and post Neighborhood Watch signs on streets, warning criminals that they are in an active Neighborhood Watch Community.</p> <p>The foundation for creating and maintaining neighborhood crime prevention groups (Neighborhood Watch) is based on the assumption</p> <hr/>

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that a group of people in the neighborhood can come together to reestablish informal control, and can thereby increase the quality of life and reduce the crime rate in the neighborhood.

Anyone can be part of a Neighborhood Watch Program as long as they have a willingness to get to know and care about their neighbors and build relationships and cooperation between law enforcement officers and residents.

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## Getting Started

Contact your local law enforcement agency:

- Explain that you would like to start a Neighborhood Watch group and ask for assistance.
- Get help from their crime prevention unit. Crime prevention officers or specialists can help organize the initial meeting.
- Ask about the crime condition in your neighborhood.
- Ask to have law enforcement at your first meeting.

Talk to your neighbors:

- Canvass your neighborhood for interest.
- Discuss crime problems in your area, using information provided by the local law enforcement agency.
- Explain the value of the Neighborhood Watch Program.
- Ask about convenient times to schedule your Neighborhood Watch Meeting.

Be sure to mention that:

- Neighborhood Watch does not require frequent meetings.
- It does not ask anyone to take personal risks.
- Law enforcement will attend your first meeting to answer questions about crime in the community and how law enforcement works in your area.
- Neighborhood Watch leaves the responsibility for apprehending criminals where it belongs-with law enforcement.

Hold the first meeting:

- Introduce everyone, provide name tags if needed.
  - Provide opening remarks.
  - You want to provide a relaxed atmosphere, provide simple refreshments such as coffee and cookies.
  - Ask your law officials to cover the following topics:
    - Its crime prevention programs and policies,
    - Particular crimes in the local area,
    - How to obtain Neighborhood Watch Signs,
    - Effective crime prevention techniques for home and office,
    - How citizen's can become "eyes and ears" and help them in their investigation of crimes,
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- How to report a crime: What to look for; how to describe the person, vehicle or activity; and other information that will help solve the problem.

**Block Captain (Role):**

- Be a spokesperson for the group.
- Serve as the liaison between law enforcement and you Neighborhood Watch group to organize and arrange Neighborhood Watch meetings. Recruit neighbors to host meetings.
- Maintain a list of members.
- Designate work assignments such as:
  - New members
  - Vacation House watch
  - Block parents
  - Neighborhood patrol
  - Fund Raising
  - Secretarial duties
  - Develop and maintain block maps.
  - Materials Distribution

Remember to report crimes to law enforcement first then to their Block Captains so he or she can alert other neighbors of the problem.

It is wise to rotate the Block Captain position on a regularly scheduled basis. However always notify law enforcement of the Block Captain change.

**Develop and Distribute Maps** - Maps will help give members of law enforcement precise information when reporting suspicious activity in your neighborhood. The map should:

- Identify the Block Captain/Coordinator.
- Clearly, identify streets, cross-streets, and compass points.
- Show name, address, and phone numbers of each home and identify those that have burglar alarms.
- Identify senior citizens and/ or neighbors with health problems and special needs.
- List the make, model, year, and license number of the vehicles at each home. Identify those that are there during the daytime hours.
- Include emergency numbers of Police/Sheriff/Fire along with Refuse Company, Street Department, and Water Department.
- Update and redistribute new information to all members.

Knowing more about your neighbors, their vehicles and their daily routine will help you recognize unusual or suspicious activities.

- Consider exchanging the following type of information with your neighbors:
  - Home and work numbers



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- Number, ages, and names of family members or residents
  - Work hours
  - School or day care hours of children
  - Who owns dogs
  - Planned vacations or visitors
  - Scheduled deliveries

Maintaining a Neighborhood Watch Program - Your Neighborhood Watch Network is underway, be sure that everyone understands and observes the following guidelines:

- Be alert to unusual or suspicious behavior in your neighborhood. Call authorities if warranted. Write down the descriptions of person(s), vehicles, and license numbers.
- Advise your neighbors if your house will be unoccupied for an extended time. Provide information on how to reach you in an emergency.
- Look after your neighbors home while they are away and ask them to look after yours. This includes picking up the newspapers, returning the trashcans from the street. Do not leave signals that indicate no one is home.
- Attended Neighborhood Watch Programs meetings and above all get involved. It is the most effective way to prevent crime and make sure your neighbor is safe.
- Remember the job of a neighborhood watch member is to report crimes not to attempt to apprehend criminals. Let the law enforcement community handle that responsibility.

Program Activities - Keeping a Neighborhood Watch program active is by getting everyone involved, this will create a feeling of pride and the atmosphere of a small town-even in a large city. Neighborhood Watch can easily be adapted to meet the needs wherever you live. This includes the creation of special apartment complex programs.

Active Neighborhood Watch groups can make changes through their local officials, such as improving street lighting, and changing traffic flow patterns. Active apartment or multi-family dwelling groups can make changes by working with their landlords or building managers. They can work together to change lighting and security of each individual unit as well as communal areas and assist in developing policy to improve property security.

Make belonging to the Neighborhood Watch Program and enjoyable. Make the meetings fun as well as meaningful. Use your imagination. Schedule potlucks dinners, organizing clean up campaigns or hold block parties. Keep members involved and do not over burden any one person.

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**Home and Multi-Dwelling Unit Security:**

- Ask the local law enforcement agency to assist with "home security surveys" for individual residences as well as apartment and multi-unit dwelling.
- Invite an officer to speak to the Neighborhood Watch group about security in the home or multi-dwelling unit environment.
- Learn how to secure your home with:
  - Effective door and window locks
  - Adequate exterior lighting
  - Security habits
  - Landscaping
  - Alarm system

**Property Identification** - The identification program encourages homeowners to mark their property to make it easier to identify if stolen. The program provides window decals as a warning to burglars:

- Purchase an electric engraver that members of your Neighborhood Watch group can use to mark items such as television, computers, and stereos. Encourage residents to engrave their drivers license number preceded by "CA" on personal property. Note: Do not use social security numbers.
- Encourage residents to make a list of their firearms, personal computer(s) and other electronic equipment along with their serial and model numbers. Keep the list in a safe place such as the freezer or a safety deposit box.
- Photograph items such as jewelry. For larger items, use a video camera to record ownership.

**Block Parent** - Develop a "Block Parent" system:

- Identify home that children know they can go when they need assistance and their own parents are not home.
- Place signs in windows of selected houses so that children can find them easily.
- Ask parents to introduce their children to these "block parents" before emergencies arise.

**Bicycle Safety**

- Hold a "bike rodeo" within your neighborhood. Concluded the event with a bicycle security and safety program.
- Encourage all to license their bicycles with a local law enforcement agency.

**Silent Observers:**

- In many communities, senior citizens, shut-ins, persons who work at home, and other neighborhood people watch for and report suspicious events.
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- Some programs are designed so that observers may report by number rather than by name to protect their identities.
  - Call your law enforcement agency to find out if it is participating in programs, such as "Silent Witness, Secret Witness, Witness Anonymous or Crime Stoppers" to encourage crime reporting.

Communications - Develop communications networks with neighbors and law enforcement agencies. Use cell phones or regular phones for emergency communications with neighbor and/or law enforcement agencies. Keep an emergency phone list next to your phone, along with a list of all your neighbors.

Crime Awareness - Call upon law enforcement experts and community leaders to participate in neighborhood meetings or workshops on variety of topics. This includes:

- Personal safety tips, prevention of rape, assaults or robbery
- Bicycle, auto, or boat theft prevention
- Alcohol and other drug use and abuse
- Drug houses and clandestine laboratories
- School safety
- Senior Citizens, con game, personal safety and elder abuse
- Criminal Justice System, police, courts, and corrections

Neighborhood Watch Coalitions - In many communities, individual Neighborhood Watch groups unite to form coalitions. By coordinating their efforts, individual groups find they can share valuable information, as well as increase the impact of their block captains who represent their neighborhood at coalitions meetings.

Some groups even form organizations to raise money for crime prevention programs within their communities. If you would like to explore these possibilities, discuss them with the local law enforcement agency.

If a Crime Occurs/ Report it. Unfortunately, only about half of all crimes are reported. Too bad, because law enforcement can't do anything if they are not aware of it. Eyewitness information is the key to solving many crimes. Remember these tips when reporting crime to law enforcement agencies:

- Call law enforcement immediately. A five-minute delay can reduce the chance of ever catching the criminal.
  - Tell law enforcement as much as you can. No fact is too trivial. In many cases, it is what victims and witnesses tell police about criminals that result in arrest. Law enforcement can use answers to as many of the following questions as possible. However, remember wrong information is worse than no information. Remember these tips when reporting a crime:
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- What occurred?
  - When did this occur?
  - Where did this occur?
  - How many suspects are there?
  - What did they do?
  - What did they take?
  - Which way did they go?
  - Were there any other witnesses?
  - What are their names, addresses, or phone numbers?
  - Provide any other information that might be useful.
  - Can you describe their vehicle(s)?
    - License number
    - Color
    - Make
    - Year
    - Condition
    - Last direction of travel

Law enforcement receives many calls for service each day. They may not be able to respond immediately. They have to prioritize their calls based on the incident or situation and its severity. They will get to you as soon as possible.

#### Suspect Description Form:

- Sex
- Race
- Age
- Height
- Weight
- Hair color
- Length
- Style
- Side Burns
- Eye color
- Glasses
- Facial, complexion, mustache, beard, scars
- Clothing, hat, shirt, pants, skirt, dress,
- Gloves, jewelry
- Purse
- Weapons, handgun, knife

Training - Training is done within each Neighborhood Watch community. Leaders within each community should be selected. The leaders need to be organized and motivated. It is important to keep the enthusiasm going. To do this, it is necessary to choose new projects so that there is always something on which to keep the focus. In addition, leaders need to communicate to their communities and

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the area Citizen Corps Council.

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**VOLUNTEERS IN  
POLICE SERVICE  
(VIPS)**

The Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) members support busy law enforcement departments in order to free up officers for frontline duty. This program seeks to increase volunteer service to local law enforcement agencies, help citizens learn about how they can get involved in VIPS programs and establish programs in their area.

Adult citizens who are familiar with the local areas shall comprise the Volunteers in Police Service. These trained volunteers shall be utilized to enhance vital crime prevention services and community awareness. VIPS Citizen patrol units may perform vacation house checks, conduct business and residential security surveys, and perform welfare checks on invalid and elderly persons. With additional optional training and certification, members may perform traffic control, issue handicap parking citations, and perform other duties as permitted by the Station Commander.

VIPS members shall not be allowed to take enforcement action, carry any weapons or chemical agents or make arrests. Any suspicious activity observed shall immediately be reported to the local Sheriff's Station.

VIPS is a crime prevention program exercising proactive law enforcement principles. The program is expressly comprised of volunteers having an interest in their local law enforcement agency. All volunteers will attend a VIPS Citizen Patrol Training Academy and monthly meetings.

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**Eligibility  
Requirements**

Most agencies will screen volunteers very thoroughly. Potential volunteers will be asked to provide necessary background information and to sign a release form to allow a criminal background and/or financial background check.

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**Training**

Local "Volunteers in Police Service" programs are individually designed. Many agencies have a volunteer handbook that is provided at program entry. Most agencies will likely have a short orientation and training to introduce volunteers to law enforcement practices. If an assignment requires additional training (for example, data entry) the volunteer will receive that as well. Many agencies have citizen academies, which familiarize citizens with many aspects of policing. Not all agencies have such programs in place. Another excellent volunteer orientation is a series of ride-alongs with officers on various shifts.

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**MEDICAL  
RESERVE CORPS  
(MRC)**

[Note: MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS GRANTS! The Department of Health and Human Services published a Federal Register notice on June 3 announcing the availability of \\$6 million in funding to community-based organizations, including Citizen Corps Councils, for "establishing community-based, citizen volunteer Medical Reserve Corps units." This grant will fund approximately 120 awards of up to \\$50,000 to new applicant communities. Applications must be submitted by close of the business day, 5 PM Time, July 18, 2003.](#)

**Program  
Description**

The Human and Health Services (HHS) Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) will coordinate the skills of practicing and retired physicians, nurses, and other health professionals who are eager to volunteer during emergencies.

The MRC will provide communities with volunteers who can assist health professionals during large-scale local emergencies. Local communities will develop their own Medical Reserve Corps and identify the unique needs of the area. For example, MRC volunteers may deliver necessary public health services during a crisis and provide direct care to those with less serious injuries. MRC volunteers may also serve a vital role by assisting their communities with ongoing public health needs (e.g., immunizations, health and nutrition education, and volunteering in community health centers and local hospitals).

**Eligibility  
Requirements**

All Medical Reserve Corps volunteers must have appropriate education, training and experience. All members of an MRC unit do not need the same education and training, although there are some common elements.

When recruiting for an MRC unit, volunteers must be asked to show proof of their qualifications, including education and work experience, diplomas, current or past certifications and licensure. This requirement includes those volunteers who perform numerous functions that do not involve direct patient/victim medical care.

At a minimum, it is recommended that MRC members have the following current skills:

[This section is under development.](#)

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**Training**

There is not one particular way to train Medical Reserve Corp members. However, the *Medical Reserve Corp/ A Guide for Local Leader* should be followed to ensure consistency between all MRC groups.

Due to the fact that each Medical Reserve Corps group has individual methods of management and training, it will be up to the MRC leaders to maintain the necessary training to meet its community's needs. In addition, there should be regular meetings and drills to ensure maximum emergency preparedness and communication within each MRC group.

The Human and Health Services Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) will coordinate the skills of practicing and retired physicians, nurses, and other health professionals who are eager to volunteer during emergencies.

The MRC will provide communities with volunteers who can assist health professionals during large-scale local emergencies. Local communities will develop their own Medical Reserve Corps and identify the unique needs of the area. For example, MRC volunteers may deliver necessary public health services during a crisis and provide direct care to those with less serious injuries. MRC volunteers may also serve a vital role by assisting their communities with ongoing public health needs (e.g., immunizations, health and nutrition education, and volunteering in community health centers and local hospitals).

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**OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

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**COUNTY LEVEL**

[The Operational Area \(OA\) through the Citizen Corps Council Advisory Committee will use existing brochures from the Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) and the American Red Cross. It will also use Web Sites and Public Service Announcements, as well as making direct outreach contact with volunteer groups that are identified as not coordinated through a recognized program such as Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters \(VOAD\), or with ties to the Public Safety Community. Another avenue is to use the Operational Area Coordinating Council \(OACC\) training subcommittee to assist in promoting and scheduling classes.](#)

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<b>CITY LEVEL</b>	<a href="#"><u>Each City/Town/ will be responsible for outreach programs to the Community, Schools, and Business for their jurisdiction. In addition to scheduling their training programs.</u></a>
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## ALLOCATION OF SUPPLIES

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<b>SUPPLY ITEMS</b>	Each of the <a href="#"><u>four</u></a> Citizen Corps programs requires various types of supplies.
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<b>CERT</b>	<a href="#"><u>Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): Each new student will receive a CERT responder backpack, safety helmet with chinstrap, vest, and student manual. Other equipment needed will be the responsibility of the student.</u></a>
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<b>Redistribution of non-used CERT Responder Equipment</b>	<a href="#"><u>The Citizen Corps Advisory Committee (CCAC), made the decision to purchase, with the allotted grant funds, CERT Responder Equipment Backpacks, that will included safety helmet with chin strap, vest and student manual. These Backpacks will be available to all cities/towns/ county who participate in the program. However, those cities/towns/ county that do not participate in the Citizen Corps Program, will forfeit their allotment of equipment and it will be redistribution to the cities/towns/county that are participating in the program.</u></a>
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**Note:** The following components of the Citizen Corps Program have yet to be addressed with funding or direction from FEMA, or from the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GO SERV).

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<b>Neighborhood Watch</b>	<a href="#"><u>Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program, which enlists the active participation of citizens in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime in their communities. For over thirty - (30) years, the Neighborhood Watch Program has successfully kept people safe in their homes and neighborhoods throughout the nation. By bringing together local officials, law enforcement and citizens, Neighborhood Watch engages public and private community members in the common cause of public safety.</u></a>
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<b>Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)</b>	<a href="#"><u>This section is under development.</u></a>
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**Medical Reserve  
Corps (MRC)**

[Medical Reserve Corps The Department of Health and Human Services published a Federal notice June 3, 2003 announcing the availability of \\$6 million dollars in funding to community-based organizations including Citizen Corps Councils, for establishing community-based, Citizen's Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps Unit's. It is anticipated that this will fund 120 awards of up to \\$50,000.](#)

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